

Message Text

PAGE 01 PEKING 00089 200352Z

63/63

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

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FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3105

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USNATO BRUSSELS 014

AMCONSUL KARACHI

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 089

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR NUMEROUS GARBLED PORTIONS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

KARACHI PASS AMBASSADOR BUSH

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, HUR

SUBJECT: GERMAN CSU CHAIRMAN STRAUSS VISIT TO PRC

BEGIN SUMMARY. MEETINGS BETWEEN TOP PRS LEADERS AND GERMAN CSU CHAIRMAN STRAUSS CONCENTRATED ON EUROPEAN SECURITY AND MILITARY POLICY. ON EUROPE, CHINESE LEADERS TOOK GENERALLY WELL KNOWN POSITIONS, BUT ADDED NEW ELEMENT OF CONCERN OVER POSSIBLE

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PAGE 02 PEKING 00089 200352Z

SOVIET ADVANCES INTO THE BALKANS. U.S. ROLE IN EUROPE WAS DESCRIBED AS A RESPONSIBILITY WHICH IS IN U.S. INTEREST.

WHILE CHINES CONCEDED THAT A MILITARY CONFLICT BETWEEN SUPERPOWERS MIGHT INEVITABLY LEAD TO A NUCLEAR EXCHANGE, THEY

SAID WAR BETWEEN CHINA AND SOVIET UNION COULD BE FOUGHT BY CONVENTIONAL MEANS WITHOUT RESORT TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS. VICE CHIEF OF STAFF LI TA SAID CHINA IS TRYING TO CATCH UP IN DEFENSE CAPABILITY AGAINST AIR ATTACK. STRAUSS FOUND BOTH MAO TSE-TUNG AND CHOU EN-LAI ALERT AND IN REASONABLY GOOD HEALTH CONSIDERING THEIR AGES.
END SUMMARY.

1. GERMAN CSU CHAIRMAN FRANZ-JOSEF STRAUSS LEFT PEKING FOR A TOUR OF CHINA'S NORTHEAST JANUARY 17 FOLLOWING TALKS WITH MAO-TSE-TUNG, CHOU EN-LAI, VICE PREMIER TENG HSIAO-PING, FONGMIN CHIAO KUAN-HUA, AND PLA DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF LI TA. ACCORDING TO DPA CORRESPONDENT HANS BARGAMANN WHO ATTENDED OPENING PORTIONS OF SEVERAL MEETINGS AND WAS GIVEN BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS BY STRAUSS, DISCUSSIONS FOCUSED ALMOST ENTIRELY ON QUESTIONS OF EUROPEAN SECURITY AND MILITARY POLICY. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF STRAUSS' CONVERSATIONS AS PROVIDED BY BARGAMANN.

2. EUROPEAN SECURITY - BOTH TENG HSIAO-PING AND CHIAO KUAN-HUA DISCUSSED EUROPEAN SECURITY ALONG STANDARD LINES, STRESSING SOVIET THREAT. A NEW ELEMENT WAS ADDED, HOWEVER, IN THEIR EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER SOVIET INTENTIONS IN THE BALKANS. TENG IN PARTICULAR EMPHASIZED THAT YUGOSLAVIA AFTER TITO WILL BE IN DANGER OF BREAKING UP AS RESULT OF DIVIDED NATIONALITIES, AND SOVIETS WILL BE IN A POSITION TO MOVE IN. HE ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER PRESSURES ON ROMANIA. IF SOVIETS GAINED DIRECT ACCESS TO MEDITERRANEAN THROUGH YUGOSLAVIA, TENG SAID, THEY COULD THEN BRING PRESSURE ON ARAB STATES. ITALY WAS MENTIONED AS ANOTHER UNSTABLE AREA, AND TENG INDICATED NO ENTHUSIASM FOR A COMMUNIST VICTORY THERE.

3. QUESTIONED ON U.S. ROLE IN EUROPE, STRAUSS SAID AMERICAN FORCES WERE ESSENTIAL AS A DETERRENT TO SOVIET EXPANSION. TENG AGREED, BUT NOTED THAT U.S. SHOULD NOT VIEW ITS ROLE AS PROVIDING A PROTECTIVE UMBRELLA FOR EUROPE. AMERICAN DEFENSE BEGINS IN EUROPE, HE SAID, AND U.S. AS ONE OF THE POWERS
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PEKING 00089 200352Z

RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DIVISION OF EUROPE, MUST ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITS DEFENSE. IN MEETING WITH CHIAO KUAN-HUA STRAUSS POSED DIRECT QUESTION OF WHY PRC CLAIMS THAT WAR BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS IS INEVITABLE. CHIAO SAID HE WOULD PROVIDE AN ANSWER AT THE FOLLOWING DAY'S MEETING. NEXT DAY, STRAUSS SAID, CHIAO TALKED ALL AROUND THE QUESTION BUT COULD PROVIDE NO PLAUSIBLE RATIONALE. STRAUSS SAID HE FOUND HIS STATEMENTS INTERNALLY CONTRADICTORY AND COMPLETELY UNCONVINCING.

4. MILITARY POLICY - AS WITH OTHER RECENT FOREIGN LEADERS VISITING PRC, CHINESE RAISED QUESTION OF CONVENTIONAL VERSUS NUCLEAR WARFARE, ASKING STRAUSS WHETHER HE CONSIDERED IT POSSIBLE FOR A WAR TO BE WAGED BETWEEN NUCLEAR POWERS BY PURELY CONVENTIONAL MEANS. STRAUSS SAID HE DID NOT,

ARGUING THAT THE LOSING SIDE IN ANY CONVENTIOANL CONFLICT WULD ULTIMATELY FEEL FORCED TO UTILIZE ITS NUCLEAR ARSENAL. CHIAO KUAN-HUA SAID STRAUSS MIGHT BE RIGHT IN THE CASE OF THE TWO SUPERPOWERS, BUT THAT IT WAS THE PRC'S VIEW THAT A WAR BETWEEN CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION COULD BE WAGED BY PURELY CONVENTIONAL MEANS. DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF LI TA ASKED STRAUSS FOR HIS ASSESSMENT OF CHINA'S DEFENSE CAPABILITIES. AFTER FIRST PROTESTING THAT HE HAD INSUFFICIENT EXPERTISE ON WHICH TO BASE SUCH A JUDGMENT, STRAUSS OFFERED THE OBSERVATION THAT "YOUR HOUSE HAS NO ROOF" (E.E. WHILE CHINA IS WELL PREPARED FOR A MAJOR CONVENTIONAL GROUND ATTACK, IT IS INSUFFICIENTLY PREPARED FOR EITHER A BOMBER OR MISSILE STRIKE). LI TA AGREED THAT THIS WAS A MAJOR PROBLEM AND SAID THAT CHINA WAS MAKING EFFORTS TO CATCH UP IN THESE AREAS.

5. BARGMANN SAID HE WAS PRESENT FOR THE OPENING OF THE MEETINGS BETWEEN TENG AND STRAUSS AND WAS STARTLED TO HEAR TENG BEGIN THE CONVERSATION BY SAYING , "IN THE WEST YOU ARE CONSIDERED A WAR MONGER AND AN ENEMY OF DETENTE. WE TOO ARE CALLED WARMONGERS AND A GANG OF CRIMINALS. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT; THE ONLY TROUBLE IS THAT THERE AREN'T MORE OF US."

6. ON PERSONALITIES, BARGMANN SAID STRAUSS FOUND THAT MAO "LOOKED HIS AGE" BUT WAS ALERT AND WELL BRIEFED. HE STOOD UNAIDED AND ROSE BY HIMSELF FROM AN EASY CHAIR ON STRAUSS' DEPARTURE. STRAUSS REFUSED TO DIVULGE THE SITE OF THE MAO MEETING, BUT CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 PEKING 00089 200352Z

POINTEDLY SPOKE ONLY IN TERMS OF TRAVELLING BY CAR. FROM THIS BARGMANN HAS CONCLUDED THAT MAO IS NOW LOCATED SOMEWHERE NEAR PEKING, PERHAPS IN THE WESTERN HILLS. (COMMENT: WE THINK IT EQUALLY LIKELY THAT STRAUSS MIGHT HAVE BEEN DISSEMBLING AND RESERVE JUDGMENT ON MAO'S WHEREABOUTS LACKING FURTHER EVIDENCE.) MEETING WITH CHOU EN-LAI TOOK PLACE AFTER MIDNIGHT FOLLOWING MEETING WITH MAO, AND STRAUSS FOUND CHOU FRAGILE BUT APPARENTLY IN GOOD HEALTH AND ALERT. STRAUSS WAS SURPRISED WHEN TOLD THAT NCNA HAD REPORTED MEETING TOOK PLACE IN A HOSPITAL, SAYING THE ROOM LOOKED JUST LIKE ALL OF THE RECEPTION ROOMS AT OTHER VILLAS HE HAD SEEN AND THERE WAS NOT A SIGN THAT HE COULD SEE OF ITS BEING A HOSPITAL. CONVERSATION WAS LARGELY A SUMMATION OF STRAUSS' TALKS WITH TENG AND CHIAO KUAN-HUA, AND STRAUSS FOUND CHOU "BRIEFED DOWN TO THE LAST COMMA." CHOU ALSO REMINISCED ABOUT HIS DAYS IN GERMANY AND REMEMBERED THE NAME OF THE STREET ON WHICH HE LIVED AND THE NAME OF HIS LANDLADY.

7. COMMENT: STRAUSS HAS RECEIVED EXTRAORDINARY TREATMENT FOR AN OPPOSITION LEADER, RIVALLING IN EVERYTHING BUT PROTOCOL CEREMONY THE RECEPTION ACCORDED FORMER BRITISH PRIME MINISTER HEATH. BARGMANN, WHO CLAIMS TO BE CLOSE TO CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT, SAID THAT WHILE SCHMIDT VISIT IS STILL DEFINITELY ON, THE TIMING MAY BE AFFECTED BY THE LEVEL OF STRAUSS' CONVERSATIONS AND FRG

ATTEMPTS TO GET ASSURANCE FROM PRC EMBASSY IN BONN THAT MAO WILL
DEFINITELY MEET WITH THE CHANCELLOR. ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE
IMPORTANCE OF THE VISIT WAS THE FACT THAT PRC AMBASSADOR
TO BONN, WANG SHU, SHOWED UP IN PEKING SHORTLY AFTER STRAUSS
ARRIVED, CLAIMING THAT HE WAS BACK BECAUSED OF HIS DAUGHTER'S
MEDICAL RPBLEMS. CHIAO KUAN-HUA RECENTLY EXPRESSED
THE VIEW TO NEW ZEALAND AMBASSADOR HARLAND THAT THE MOST DANGEROUS
FORCES IN EUROPE ARE THE LIBERAL SOCIALIST GOVERNMENTS DUPED
BY SOVIET DETENTE PROPAGANDA. HE PREDICTED THAT THE DEEPENING
ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE WEST WOULD BRING TO POWER MORE CONSERVATIVE
GOVERNMENTS LESS LIKELY TO BE TAKEN IN BY MOSCOW. THE PRC SEEMS TO
BE ACTING ON THIS ASSUMPTION IN THE CASE OF STRAUSS.
HOLDRIDGE

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